

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 5, 13 and 22-23 have been amended herein. All of the pending claims 1 through 23 are presented, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.121(c)(1)(i) and 1.121(c)(3), in clean form below. Please enter these claims as amended. Also attached is a marked-up version of the claims amended herein pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii).

1. In a method of producing semiconductor chips wherein the chips are at least fabricated and characterized, the improvement comprising:
marking with identifying indicia only those chips which are characterized for use.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said marking is effected following packaging of the chips.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said marking is effected as the last step in the production process.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said marking comprises laser marking.

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5. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said marking comprises:
providing energy reactive marking material over a surface of at least one chip which is characterized for use; and
exposing at least selected portions of at least one of said surface and said energy reactive marking material to energy to form a mark on said surface.
 6. The method of claim 5, wherein said exposing is effected without substantially creating an imprint in said surface.

7. A method for producing semiconductor chips, comprising:
fabricating at least one semiconductor chip;
determining whether said at least one semiconductor chip is suitable for use; and
marking said at least one semiconductor chip only if said at least one semiconductor chip is
determined to be suitable for use.
8. The method of claim 7, further comprising packaging said at least one semiconductor
chip.
9. The method of claim 7, wherein said marking is effected as the last step in the
production process.
10. The method of claim 7, wherein said marking comprises laser marking.
11. The method of claim 7, wherein said marking comprises:
providing energy reactive marking material over at least a portion of a surface of said at least one
semiconductor chip; and
exposing at least selected portions of at least one of said surface and said energy reactive marking
material to energy to form a mark on said surface.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein said exposing is effected without creating an imprint
in said surface.
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13. (Amended) A method for producing semiconductor chips, comprising:
providing at least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use and at
least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as unsuitable for use; and
marking with identifying indicia only said at least one semiconductor chip which has been
characterized as suitable for use.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said providing comprises providing at least one packaged semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use and at least one packaged semiconductor chip which has been characterized as unsuitable for use.
15. The method of claim 13, wherein said marking is effected as the last step in the production process.
16. The method of claim 13, wherein said marking comprises laser marking.
17. The method of claim 13, wherein said marking comprises:
providing energy reactive marking material over at least a portion of a surface of said at least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use; and
exposing at least selected portions of at least one of said surface and said energy reactive marking material to energy to form a mark on said surface.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein said exposing is effected without forming an imprint in said surface.
19. The method of claim 13, further comprising comparing said identifying indicia to an acceptable identifying indicia model.
20. The method of claim 19, further comprising determining whether said identifying indicia substantially matches said acceptable identifying indicia model.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising rejecting said at least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use if its respective identifying indicia does not substantially match said acceptable identifying indicia model.

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22. (Amended) The method of claim 21, further comprising removing said identifying indicia which does not substantially match said acceptable identifying indicia model from said rejected at least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use.

23. (Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising remarking said rejected at least one semiconductor chip which has been characterized as suitable for use.